

## Message Text

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ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 TRSE-00

SS-15 SP-02 L-03 OMB-01 AID-05 NSC-05 ACDA-05 MC-02

/060 W

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R 171629Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9054

INFO SECDEF WASHDC/ISA:NESA/

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER/ECJ4/7-SA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 2378

DEPT FOR NEA/ARN/PM/SAS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, LE

SUBJ: CHANGES IN FOREIGN MILITARY TRAINING PROGRAM

REF: (AL STATE 17013 (230319Z JAN 76), (B) STATE 51768 (031747Z  
MAR 76)

SUMMARY: IT IS DIFFICULT TO ASSESS WHAT THE FULL IMPACT OF  
TUITION PRICE INCREASES WILL BE UNTIL FIRM DATA IS AVAILABLE  
ON: (1) ACTUAL INCREASES; AND (2) FUNDING LEVELS FOR FY 77  
AND OUTYEARS. HOWEVER, DUE TO SOME FORM OF REGIONAL OR  
INTERNAL INSTABILITY, LEBANON HAS NOT USED THE FULL AMOUNT OF  
GRANT AID (G/A) TRAINING FUNDS AVAILABLE IN THE RECENT PAST.  
BECAUSE OF THE INTERNAL SECURITY SITUATION SO FAR IN FY 76, WE  
DO NOT ANTICIPATE ANY DERIOUS PROBLEM WITH THIS YEAR'S PROGRAM,  
EVEN WITH THE PRICE INCREASE. WE ALSO DO NOT ENVISION ADVERSE  
IMPACT IN FY 77 IF THE DOLS 300,000 PROPOSED IN REF A IS AP-  
PROVED. HOWEVER, A CUT TO LESS THAN DOLS 250,000 WOULD  
RESULT IN CANCELLATION OF CERTAIN HIGH PRIORITY TRAINING AND  
WOULD HAVE AN ADVERSE IMPACT ON EFFECTIVE REORGANIZATION/  
RECONSTITUTION OF THE LEBANESE ARMED FORCES (LAF) ONCE THE  
CIVIL WAR IS OVER. WHILE BILATERAL RELATIONS WOULD NOT BE  
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SERIOUSLY AFFECTED BY MODERATE DECREASE IN AVAILABLE G/A

TRAINING, COMPLETE ELIMINATION OF THE PROGRAM WOULD IMPACT ON U.S. MILITARY RELATIONS WITH THE LAF AND WOULD INHIBIT OUR ABILITY TO INFLUENCE THE GOL/LAF TOWARD ACHIEVEMENT OF U.S. SECURITY ASSISTANCE OBJECTIVES IN LEBANON. END SUMMARY.

1. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS KEYED TO PARA 5, REF B:

A. ASSUMING CONTINUED G/A TRAINING FOR LEBANON AFTER FY 77, WE DO NOT ANTICIPATE A MAJOR PROBLEM IN BILATERAL RELATIONS BY THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF INCREASED TUITION COSTS. WE HAVE ALREADY REVIEWED THE FY 76 PROGRAM WITH THE LAF, AND, UNLESS FINAL TUITION COSTS VARY SIGNIFICANTLY FROM THE ESTIMATED INCREASE OF 50 PERCENT, ESSENTIAL TRAINING CAN STILL BE CONDUCTED.

B. ALL U.S. TRAINING OF THE LAF IS G/A. THE LAF CONSIDER COMMND AND STAFF, OFFICER ADVANCED, AND NEW EQUIPMENT OPERATOR/MAINTENANCE COURSES AS HIGHEST PRIORITY. IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THEY WOULD MAINTAIN PRESENT LEVEL OF TRAINING IF THEY WERE REQUIRED TO PAY FOR IT, INASMUCH AS THEIR TRAINING BUDGET WAS ALREADY EXTENDED BY THEIR AGREEMENT LAST YEAR TO PAY FOR TRANSPORTATION COSTS TO AND FROM CONUS. IN THE EVENT G/A FUNDS ARE INSUFFICIENT, OR ARE ELIMINATED, THE LAF WILL PROBABLY TRY TO REPLACE U.S. TRAINING WITH TRAINING IN FRANCE. IF THE FRENCH ARE UNWILLING TO INCREASE THEIR ALREADY REDUCED PROGRAM, THE LAF WILL MOST LIKELY HAVE TO RELY ON OTHER MEMBERS OF THE ARAB LEAGUE. THEY HAVE ALREADY BEGUN NEGOTIATING WITH JORDAN FOR BASIC OFFICER AND STAFF LEVEL (MIDDLE, OR FIELD, GRADE) TRAINING TO REPLACE THAT WHICH USED TO BE GIVEN BY FRANCE.

C. THE PRIMARY U.S. SECURITY ASSISTANCE OBJECTIVES FOR LEBANON ARE TO ASSIST IN DEVELOPING A VIABLE INTERNAL SECURITY FORCE AND AND TO ENSURE, AS BEST WE CAN, A PRO-WESTERN STANCE OF THE LAF. U.S. TRAINING PROVIDED TO LAF UNDER THEIR PROGRAM HAS TRADITIONALLY BEEN ORIENTED TO SUPPORT THESE OBJECTIVES, AND FORTUNATELY THE LATTER GENERALLY COINCIDE WITH LAF PRIORITIES. (1) WE ASSESS LAF'S GREATEST NEED TO BE JUNIOR AND MIDDLE GRADE OFFICER LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND SENIOR GRADE OFFICER EXPERTISE IN MODERN MILITARY MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES. CONFIDENTIAL

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(2) IF THE PROPOSED DOLS 300,000 FOR FY 77 IS CUT TO NO LEASS THAN DOLS 250,000, WE ESTIMATE THAT, EVEN WITH 50 PERCENT INCREASE IN TUITION COSTS, WE WILL BE ABLE TO PROVIDE ESSENTIAL TRAINING. WE SAY THIS BECAUSE (A) IN ANTICIPATION OF THE PRICE INCREASE, WE HAVE NOT PROGRAMMED/OBLIGATED THE FULL DOLS 300,000 AND (B) THERE ARE MARGINALLY PRODUCTIVE COURSES IN THE FY 77 PROGRAM THAT CAN BE REMOVED TO BRING US DOWN TO DOLS 250,000

BEFORE WE HAVE TO START CUTTING HIGH PRIORITY TRAINING.

D. COURSES THAT LAF WOULD PROBABLY CANCEL IF ADEQUATE G/A FUNDS WERE NOT PROVIDED ARE (IN ORDER OF ELIMINATION): (1) COMBAT SERVICE SUPPORT; (2) ALL NAVY; (3) AIR FORCE, OTHER THAN STAFF AND ADVANCED COURSES; (4) COMBAT SUPPORT; AND (5) ALL BUT ESSENTIAL NEW EQUIPMENT SKILL COURSES. IF ALL G/A FUNDS WERE SUSPENDED, THE LAF WOULD PROBABLY ONLY ATTEND THE USA CANDGSC; LIMITED COMBAT ARMS ADVANCED COURSES; AND AN OC-CASIONAL ENLISTED SIGNAL REPAIR COURSE. THEY MIGHT CANCEL U.S. TRAINING ENTIRELY.

E. (1) THE LAF DO NOT HAVE THE CAPABILITY TO PROVIDE ADVANCED OR STAFF LEVEL (MIDDLE OR FIELD, GRADE) TRAINING. AFTER FRANCE, THEIR MOST LIKELY CHOICE OF A SUBSTITUTE TRAINING SOURCE IS JORDAN OR EGYPT, BOTH OF WHICH HAVE BEEN USED BEFORE. THE JORDANIAN ARMY STAFF COURSE HAS A GOOD REPUTATION. AS IT IS GIVEN IN ARABIC AND IS ORIENTED ON SMALL ARMY OPERATIONS AND LOGISTICS, LAF STUDENTS MIGHT EVEN BENEFIT MORE FROM THIS COURSE THAN THEY WOULD FROM USA CANDGSC. COMBAT ARMS ADVANCED COURSES ARE ANOTHER QUESTION ENTIRELY. THERE ARE NO COMPARABLE COURSES GIVEN ANYWHERE IN THE ARAB WORLD AND, OVER A PERIOD OF TIME, WE COULD EXPECT A DECREASE IN EFFECTIVENESS OF THE LAF OFFICER CORPS IF THESE COURSES WERE ELIMINATED.

(2) AS GOL BUDGET PERMITS, THE LAF WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE TO BUY U.S. LIGHT ARMS, SIGNAL, AND TRANSPORTATION EQUIPMENT. HOWEVER, IF GOL EDGES TOWARD CONFRONTATION STATE STATUS (WHICH IT WILL BE UNDER INCREASING PRESSURE TO DO IF IT MUST RELY EXCLUSIVELY ON OTHER ARAB STATES FOR TRAINING), SYRIA WILL LIKELY GIVE LAF MORE OBSOLETE SOVIET EQUIPMENT, ESPECIALLY ARTILLERY AND ADA. AS THE LAF HAS RELIED FOR MANY YEARS ON A VARIETY OF

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WESTERN COUNTRIES FOR TRAINING. WE DO NOT FORESEE A DOCTRINAL CHANGE IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

(3) BASED ON THE LAF'S SOMEWHAT BITTER REACTION TO THE RECENT MAJOR CUTBACK IN FRENCH TRAINING ALLOCATIONS, WE CAN ONLY ASSUME THAT A SIMILAR REACTION WILL OCCUR IF THE U.S. SIGNIFICANTLY DECREASES OR ELIMINATES G/A FUNDS FOR LEBANON. EVEN SO, WE DO NOT ANTICIPATE A MAJOR IMPACT ON OVERALL BILATERAL RELATIONS AT GOVERNMENTAL LEVEL. THERE WILL PROBABLY BE, HOWEVER, AN ADVERSE IMPACT ON RELATIONS BETWEEN U.S. MILITARY AND THE LAF. THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE AS REGARDS THE NATURAL ACCESS AND MUTUAL RESPECT THAT SIMILAR TRAINING BACKGROUNDS HAS PROVIDED THE POST.

F. AT THIS CRITICAL STAGE IN LEBANON'S HISTORY, WE CONSIDER IT PARTICULARLY INOPPORTUNE TO ELIMINATE G/A

TRAINING . IN THE NEAR FUTURE, LEBANON WILL FACE THE MAJOR PROBLEM OF RECONSTITUTING, REORGANIZING, RE-EQUIPPING AND PERHAPS EVEN ENLARGING ITS ARMED FORCES, THE LAF'S NEED FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE HAS NEVER APPEARED GREATER. A CUT OFF OF U.S. TRAINING FUNDS AT THIS TIME, ALONG WITH THE FRENCH CUTBACK, MIGHT BE PERCEIVED AS A REJECTION BY THE WEST AND COULD RESULT IN A MOVE TOWARD CONFRONTATION STATE STATUS. THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERNAL SECURITY AND STABILITY IN LEBANON IS ONE OF THE MANY INGREDIENTS OF AN OVERALL PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE ARAB/ISRAELI CONFLICT. BY CUTTING OFF G/A FUNDS, WE WOULD SEVERELY LIMIT OUR CAPABILITY TO INFLUENCE THE GOL/LAF TOWARD THAT OBJECTIVE.

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## Message Attributes

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